

Special Report

Social-Emotional Climate and the Success of New Teachers: A New Look at the Ongoing Challenge of New Teacher Retention.

Jacob Murray, Open Circle

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Social-Emotional Climate and the Success of New Teachers: A New Look at the Ongoing Challenge of New Teacher Retention

A Review of the Literature

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Despite a heightened focus in recent years on the need to more effectively prepare, support, and retain new teachers, teachers in their first five years in the classroom continue to leave the profession in alarming numbers. This report suggests that current teacher education programs and school induction efforts commonly undervalue or overlook a potentially pivotal aspect—how the social-emotional climate in classrooms and schools impacts new teachers’ attitudes toward their work and their decisions about whether to remain in the profession. In response, this report reviews relevant research with a specific focus on the influence of this climate on new teachers.

With respect to classroom climate, the report examines both the prevalence and the causes of the struggles new teachers face in creating a safe and positive classroom environment and in relating to students. Three main problem areas for new teachers are identified: poor classroom management skills, an inability to deal with the uncertainty of student behavior, and a lack of cultural awareness.

In terms of school climate, this report examines the importance of new teachers’ relationships in school settings with other adults, such as colleagues and administrators. Schools with strong collegial cultures and collaborative practices, where new teachers receive appropriate, ongoing forms of support and assistance and develop a sense of connectedness to their professional peers, are found to be the most effective in developing and retaining new teachers.

This report then surveys current teacher preparation and induction programs, profiling those that stand out for their efforts to enable new teachers to address the social-emotional context of their work. It also suggests social and emotional learning (SEL) programs are a potentially salient, new source of aid for new teachers, offering specific strategies for addressing many of the social-emotional challenges encountered in both classrooms and the larger school community. This report concludes with a discussion of the implications of the report’s findings for teacher education programs, schools, and others concerned with new teacher retention.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the next several years, nothing may demand more attention from school officials than the challenge of new teacher retention. The number of new teachers leaving schools is stunning. Nationally, as many as one-third of teachers leave within their first three years; nearly half leave within five years (Ingersoll, 2002; NCTAF, 2003; Fideler & Haselkorn, 1999), and attrition rates are even higher in urban schools (Guarino, Santibañez, Daley, & Brewer, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 1997; Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2004). The need for more effective retention efforts has never been more urgent. However, current retention efforts commonly undervalue or overlook altogether a pivotal aspect for new teachers: the social-emotional climate in schools. More specifically, research suggests that the ability of new teachers to create a positive social environment in the classroom and the quality of their relationships in school settings with students and other adults, such as administrators and colleagues, significantly shape their work experiences and their decisions about whether to stay in the profession. Improving support for new teachers in these areas holds promise for enhancing both their professional success as well as retention.

The Retention Problem

Poor retention of new teachers has significant, harmful consequences for schools and children. Persistent teacher turnover undermines the consistent implementation of curriculum and instruction and wastes professional development resources (Guin, 2004). Staffing shortages created by high turnover compel schools to hire under-qualified staff, greatly diminishing the educational quality of these schools (SRI International, 2001; Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1996). Moreover, research strongly suggests that teachers must reach a critical three- to five-year threshold before they achieve job proficiency and significantly impact students' learning outcomes (Kain & Singleton, 1996; Sanders, 1996; Huling, 1998; Ferguson, 1991). Thus,

when new teachers leave early, schools struggle to maintain a cadre of skilled, experienced teachers. Further, poor retention will severely challenge schools as they prepare to meet the growing demand for new teachers resulting from rising student enrollments and the substantial number of teacher retirements anticipated over the next decade (Gerald & Hussar, 1998; NCTAF, 2003).

A New Focus

Recent research on new teacher retention—and, in turn, current retention and school reform efforts—predominantly focuses on factors such as wages and other financial incentives (Kirby & Grissmer, 1993; Murnane & Olson, 1990; Hirsch, Koppich, & Knapp, 2001); the quality and length of teacher preparation (Fowler, 2002; Raymond, Fletcher, & Luque, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001; NCTAF, 1996, 2003); poor working conditions, such as large schools and class sizes, lack of administrative support, mandated curriculum and testing, and poor facilities (Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2004; Norton, 1999; Mont & Rees, 1996; Kaufman, Moster, Trent, & Halloran, 2002; Cochran, 1988; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Johnson, Kardos, Kauffman, Liu & Donaldson, 2004); and participation in induction and mentoring programs (Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004; Fideler & Haselkorn, 1999; Darling-Hammond, 2000).

Important as these factors are to new teachers, a focus on these aspects alone paints an incomplete picture of the retention problem. One element that is largely missing, in both the prevailing retention literature and program efforts, is a full appreciation of how the social-emotional climate in classrooms and schools influences new teachers' attitudes toward work and career decisions. In particular, there is limited consideration of how the ability of new teachers to create a positive social environment in the classroom and to foster positive relationships among students, with students, and with colleagues may influence many new teachers' decisions to

remain in or to leave the classroom. These types of relationships are multifaceted and powerfully shape the work experiences and attitudes of new teachers (Lortie, 1975; Rosenholtz, 1989a; Friedman & Kass, 2002; Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Relationships in the classroom, for instance, encompass teachers' efforts to establish positive learning climates, respond when students violate behavioral norms, connect with and motivate students, and improve relations among students. Relationships with other adults in school settings include teachers' experiences with the school's professional culture, interactions with colleagues, and the types of support received from administrators and mentors.

In addition to greater awareness about how these relationships impact new teachers, retention efforts would also benefit from expanding the capacity to support new teachers in forming these relationships. In this regard, the emerging field of social and emotional learning (SEL) can potentially provide both valuable insight and concrete strategies for improving the quality of relationships in the classroom and in the school. By promoting the development of core social-emotional competencies among students and by providing demonstrated approaches and strategies, SEL programs have shown promise in enhancing teachers' abilities to foster positive classroom climates, reduce problematic behaviors by students, and form stronger bonds with both students and colleagues (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning [CASEL], 2003).

Beyond the benefit of increased retention, helping new teachers improve relationships among students, with students, and with colleagues would significantly contribute to the academic mission of schools. There is compelling evidence that teachers who relate to students effectively, manage classrooms well, and foster positive, safe learning environments also enhance students' learning outcomes (Zins, Weissberg, Wang, & Walberg, 2004;

CASEL, 2003; Osterman, 2000; Solomon, Battistich, Watson, Schaps, & Lewis, 2000; Welsh, Parke, Widaman, & O'Neil, 2001; Wilson & Shulha, 1995). Most notably, from their extensive analysis of more than two decades of research on student learning, Wang, Haertel, & Walberg (1994, 1997) found that effective classroom management and positive student-teacher interactions were more highly correlated with student academic success than other variables, be it parental involvement, curriculum, school culture, or school demographics. In terms of adult relationships, research suggests that intensive, ongoing collaboration among colleagues is among the most effective strategies for increasing teacher instructional proficiency and thus student learning gains (Garet, Porter, Desmoine, Birman, & Suk Yoon, 2001; Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004). In turn, teachers who develop a strong sense of self-efficacy are more likely to report high job satisfaction and stay in the profession (Bandura, 1997; Gold, 1996; Rosenholtz, 1985).

Report Overview

This report reviews the research on new teachers with a specific focus on how the social-emotional climate shapes their work experiences and impacts their retention. Section One examines relationships in new teachers' classrooms, reviewing both the prevalence and causes of new teachers' struggles to create a safe and positive environment and to relate to students. Section Two examines new teachers' relationships in school settings with other adults, such as colleagues, administrators, and mentors, and considers how schools foster these relationships and why these relationships are important to new teachers. Section Three reviews current teacher preparation and induction programs that address social-emotional challenges faced by new teachers. This section also includes a review of social-emotional learning (SEL) programs as a potential new source of support for beginning teachers. Finally, Section Four discusses the implications of this report's findings for schools and others concerned with new teacher retention.

SECTION ONE: RELATIONSHIPS IN THE CLASSROOM

Within any classroom, there are a myriad of formal and informal interactions between teachers and students and among students that collectively create the social-emotional environment of the classroom (Weinstein, 1991). A significant role of a teacher is to structure and manage these interactions to create a positive, safe, and supportive learning climate for students. Commonly referred to in teacher retention literature as classroom management, the scope of this work includes teachers' efforts to: establish classroom norms, rituals, rules, and modes of transition between activities; maintain discipline and address disruptive behaviors; and motivate disengaged students. The success of teachers in these areas often depends on their ability to form meaningful relationships with their students—students who feel connected to and respected by their teachers are more likely to be engaged in lessons and responsive to a teacher's guidance (Mendler, 2001; Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003; Weinstein, Tomilson-Clarke, & Curran, 2004; Saphier & Gower, 1997). For experienced teachers, these aspects of teaching are demanding. For new teachers, they can be daunting and, as research suggests, factors that influence their decision about whether to remain in the classroom.

When new teachers assume control of their classrooms, no task is more demanding for them than fostering positive student behavior. In his synthesis of more than 20 years of research on new teachers, Veenman (1984) identified classroom discipline, student motivation, and dealing with individual student differences as the most common problems reported by new teachers and principals. Brock and Grady (1996) and Stroots et al. (1999) found that the first-year teachers they studied most frequently requested help with classroom management. More recently, a survey of 600 principals nationwide commissioned by Recruiting New Teachers, Inc. (Peter Harris Research Group,

Inc, 2004) cited classroom management as the most challenging issue faced by new teachers. Similarly, Public Agenda (Farkas, Johnson, & Foleno, 2000) reported that more than half of the new teachers they surveyed felt unprepared to manage classrooms, and a Florida study reported that 43% of first-year teachers felt ill equipped to manage their classrooms (Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research, 2000). In addition, several case studies of novice teachers identify classroom discipline as a significant challenge (Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004; Gee, 2001; Gratch, 1998b; Corley, 1998; Dollase, 1992).

Not only is student behavior a clear concern among new teachers, it also appears to be a key factor influencing their retention. From their analysis of national survey data on teacher turnover, Ingersoll and Smith (2003) reported that roughly 35% of new teachers who depart because of job dissatisfaction cite student discipline as a reason for leaving—the second highest factor cited by teachers after low pay (75%). Similarly, Boser's (2000) analysis of another national data source revealed that teachers reporting concern over student discipline were twice as likely to leave as those who did not mention this as a problem.

Opinion surveys of new teachers offer additional insight about the effect of student behavior on new teacher retention. From the same national data analyzed by Ingersoll and Smith, Whitener, Gruber, Lynch, Tingos, Perona, and Fondelier (1997) reported that, after increasing salaries, the most common recommendation exiting teachers had for schools to promote greater retention was "dealing more effectively with student discipline and making schools safer." Useem (2001) found that among 60 novice teachers she surveyed in Philadelphia public schools, 40% thought it was likely they would leave within three to five years, and, among these teachers, one-third cited student behavior and discipline as primary reasons for wanting to leave.

Why New Teachers Struggle with Students

Although it points to student behavior as a factor influencing retention, research on teacher turnover is not very helpful in explaining why new teachers routinely struggle with their students. Clearly some issues with students are related to organizational and administrative factors, such as large schools and class sizes, difficult class assignments, and unclear and weakly enforced school-wide discipline policies (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Balkan, White, & Bodey, 2002; Mont & Rees, 1996; Wasley et al., 2000). Yet, despite these adverse conditions, there are many teachers—including new teachers—who successfully manage and relate to their students and deliver high quality instruction. For this reason, it is helpful to review the general literature on teachers who are effective in managing classrooms and building relationships with students. Comparing how these teachers operate in classrooms with what we know about how new teachers typically function reveals important distinctions and thus illuminates problem areas new teachers commonly encounter with students. The three main problem areas that emerge are as follows:

1. **Poor classroom-management skills**—in particular, new teachers' limited ability to establish positive classroom climates and respond effectively to student misbehavior.
2. **Inability to deal with uncertainty**—new teachers' limited capacity to respond to unanticipated student behavior.
3. **Lack of cultural awareness**—new teachers' limited understanding of and ability to teach to culturally and racially diverse students, especially important in urban settings.

Problem Area One:

Poor Classroom Management Skills

Of all the facets of teaching, none is more complex and as emotionally charged as classroom

management. Promoting positive student behavior requires teachers to engage in “systems think,” considering the ways in which the classroom environment—e.g., norms, routines, and physical layout—shapes behavior. It requires that teachers establish and become comfortable with their position of authority. It requires that teachers monitor and structure not only their interactions with students but also interactions among students. It requires addressing immediate behavioral circumstances while at the same time being mindful of how decisions and actions will lay the foundation for addressing future behavioral situations. It requires establishing trust and building relationships with students and then often needing to reestablish trust and rebuild relationships following disciplinary actions. It requires that teachers enforce general classroom rules but also rapidly take into account both the individual students and the circumstances before crafting disciplinary responses. And through all of this, teachers must fulfill their primary instructional role.

Research suggests that teachers who are effective classroom managers are skilled in two main areas: establishing positive classroom climates and responding to student misbehavior. Conversely, research on new teachers, particularly qualitative studies of new teachers, suggests that they are often weak in these same areas. In the following section, these areas are discussed in greater depth. Research-based profiles of effective teachers are contrasted with those of new teachers, illuminating important qualitative differences.

Establishing Classroom Climate

Classroom climates that are safe, orderly, and foster a sense of community among students minimize behavioral issues and promote learning (Osterman, 2000). Moreover, these climates are preventative in that they diminish stressors that contribute to behavioral issues, such as students feeling unsafe or unconnected to either their teacher or peers (CASEL,

2003; Kounin, 1970). Research suggests that teachers who are successful in creating and maintaining positive classroom climates are adept in certain sub-skill areas: rule setting, routines and transitions, situational awareness, and forming relationships. At the same time, new teachers often struggle in these same sub-skill areas.

Rule Setting

Effective Teachers

Teachers who are effective in fostering positive classroom climates begin by establishing clear and specific rules rather than vague and hard-to-enforce rules. For instance, rather than state that students will “act responsibly” and assume that it is known what is and is not responsible behavior, these teachers are more explicit, asserting that students will “speak to and treat each other respectfully.” They then further elaborate the meaning of this rule by, for example, reviewing unacceptable ways of communicating with each other.

Effective teachers develop a limited number of general rules for classroom behavior (between four to six), provide rationales for each rule, explaining why it is fair, needed, and beneficial to the classroom, and clearly outline discipline steps and consequences for not following rules. They also skillfully involve students in the rule-setting process, engaging students in thoughtful discussion about what makes an ideal classroom environment and what are fair and reasonable rules and disciplinary consequences for maintaining such an environment. Further, they regularly revisit and reinforce classroom rules throughout the year and within the course of daily instruction, drawing attention to both positive and negative behaviors as they occur (Quinn et al., 2000; McGinnis, Frederick, & Edwards, 1995; Short, Short, & Blanton, 1994; Curwin & Mendler, 1999; McLeod, Fisher, & Hoover, 2003; Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003; Pierce, 1994; Saphier & Gower, 1997; Cummings, 2000).

New Teachers

Research on new teachers suggests that, for the most part, they are adequate rule setters. Primarily, this is because rule setting is one area of classroom management that new teachers typically receive guidance in from school administrators and mentor teachers. For example, new teachers will often review classroom rules as part of their orientation process. They also commonly borrow previously developed rules from experienced colleagues. Instead, where new teachers often do struggle is in their presentation of the rules—an issue related to their overall inexperience with instruction. For instance, new teachers can discuss rules in ways that are too abstract or that lack clarity, leaving too much up to interpretation (e.g., “I expect you to act your age.”). New teachers are also less adept at involving students in the process of setting classroom rules. Again, this may be related to new teachers’ overall inexperience in designing and facilitating lesson activities, particularly interactive lessons with students. It may also be related to a common compulsion among new teachers to firmly establish themselves as authority figures—an issue discussed in more detail below. Despite this goal, however, where new teachers typically experience difficulty is not with rule setting, but with the enforcement of rules (Dollase, 1992; Brock & Grady, 2001; Gordon & Maxey, 2000).

Routines and Transitions

Effective Teachers

Teachers who effectively establish positive classroom climates are meticulous about developing classroom routines and managing the flow of classroom activities. They develop routines that efficiently focus students on certain tasks or objectives, both instruction-related routines (e.g., getting certain materials ready, dividing into groups to do station work, turning in assignments) and non-instructional or “housekeeping” routines (e.g., making announcements, taking attendance, entering and

leaving the room, cleaning up after lunch). Effective teachers review and practice these routines with students until they become established modes of operating within the classroom, eventually requiring minimal direction from teachers. These teachers also begin and end lessons and manage transitions from one activity to the next in very structured ways that minimize delays and idle, non-instructional time. Lessons are well paced and organized, and there are clear cues for starting and ending lesson activities (McLeod, Fisher, & Hoover, 2003; Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003; Saphier & Gower, 1997; Cummings, 2000).

New Teachers

The success of new teachers in establishing routines and managing the pace and transition of classroom lessons and activities varies widely. Contributing factors appear to be whether new teachers worked with supervising teachers who modeled effective routines and transitions when the new teachers were interns and if the new teachers received targeted support in these areas from mentors once in the classroom. Similar to rule setting, the ability of new teachers to establish routines and manage transition is also often related to their overall presentation and instructional skills. In other words, if teachers are unclear or awkward in their explanation of routines, students will have greater difficulty learning these routines (Brock & Grady, 2001; Gratch, 1998b; Kestner, 1994; Berliner, 1988; Humphrey, 2003; Veenman, 1984).

Situational Awareness

Effective Teachers

Teachers who effectively establish positive classroom climates demonstrate a high degree of situational awareness or “classroom savvy” (Corley, 1998). They are able to both sense the collective mood of students (e.g., engagement, boredom, or restlessness) as well as monitor the tenor of interactions between individual students. They effectively read students’ body language and are good judges of which behaviors to respond to and

which behaviors to “let go.” They also perceive when learning tasks are confusing or too hard for certain students. As a result, they are able to act preventatively, detecting and addressing potential problems before they become larger distractions or behavioral issues. For instance, an aware teacher will quickly recognize that two boys innocently joking around by making funny faces at each other has the potential to escalate into a more serious incident. The teacher takes immediate action, separating the two boys, even though they had remained quiet and working.

A teacher’s level of awareness also has the important effect of signaling to students that the teacher is “with it” (Kounin, 1970), that he or she is taking everything in and understands the various student communication patterns and subcultures that exist within the classroom. Thus, students get the message that they are unlikely to get away with certain behaviors, which helps to inhibit these behaviors. Students also develop a confidence in the teacher’s ability to control the classroom and to protect them from mistreatment by other students. This assurance lowers students’ levels of anxiety and encourages them to engage more fully in learning activities, by, for example, participating in class discussions (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003; Kounin, 1970; Brophy, 1986; Cummings, 2000).

New Teachers

Situational awareness is a common deficit among new teachers. Their inexperience limits their ability to interpret classroom phenomena and discern important events. While experienced teachers know when to intervene to diffuse a potential problem between students, new teachers often do not perceive a potential problem and react only after the situation has escalated. Returning to the example of the two joking boys, whereas the experienced teacher would intercede right away, the new teacher is more likely to either not notice the two boys or consider their behavior to be benign and thus not take action until they have

escalated their behavior by, for instance, throwing paper at each other. Further, the perception that new teachers are not attuned to what is happening in classrooms has a provocative effect on students. In other words, students are more likely to engage in negative behavior if they feel they can get away with it. They are also more apt to “take matters into their own hands” if they feel teachers cannot effectively address a problematic situation (Berliner, 1988; Corley, 1998; Tusin, 1995; Saphier & Gower, 1997).

Forming Relationships

Effective Teachers

Teachers who effectively establish a positive classroom climate are able to form trusting relationships with students. Strong teacher-student relationships foster feelings of connectedness to school among students and, in turn, reduce incidences of problem behavior (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Wentzel, 1998). In short, students who like and respect their teachers are more likely to respond positively to them. Review of the research (Deiro, 1997; Mendler, 2001; Cummings, 2000; Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003; Pierce, 1994, Saphier & Gower, 1997; Cattani, 2002) suggests that teachers successful in connecting with students are characterized by the following:

- **They are considered fair.** Particularly when disciplining students, their judgments and actions are perceived by students to be fair and consistent. Often, they review the rationale for certain rules and consequences as they are taking disciplinary action, thus focusing students’ attention on the behavior and relevant behavioral standard and not on themselves as the disciplinarian or the particular student as the wrongdoer. For instance, a teacher might respond to a student who makes a rude comment by pointing out that this behavior violates a class rule of “not making personal attacks.” The teacher might then refer to a recent similar incident and remind students
- **They create opportunities for one-on-one time with students.** Whether by scheduling regular student conferences or meeting with students before or after school, they make concerted efforts to connect with students individually. In these meetings they discuss both academic and non-academic topics (for example, what students do outside of school, how things are going at home, etc.).
- **They use appropriate self-disclosure.** In natural ways, during classroom activities or in individual meetings with students, they strengthen bonds with students by conveying their humanity—sharing relevant, suitable feelings, attitudes, and experiences with students. For instance, a teacher might share with a struggling student that she had difficulty with certain subjects in school, and discuss how this made her feel and what she did to overcome this issue.
- **They practice empathetic or “active listening.”** When communicating with students, they frequently paraphrase what students say back to them, conveying both an interest in and a desire to understand what students share with them. In doing so, they also try to detect and confirm underlying emotions in what students are saying or doing (e.g., “It sounds like you’re confused about what I asked you to do in this assignment.”).
- **They model respect.** In their interactions, they exemplify a high level of respect for the thoughts and feelings of others. They make requests politely and, during lessons,

how this was handled. This serves to both demonstrate consistency of response and place emphasis on the inappropriate behavior, rather than on the student.

validate the input of all students. For instance, wrong answers are not dismissed quickly but instead corrected in ways that acknowledge students' ideas and redirect their focus ("That's an interesting response" or "I think I know how you approached this problem...but I was think more along the lines of...").

- **They reconnect with students after taking disciplinary action.** After singling out and reprimanding a student, they help that student rejoin the classroom community by consciously connecting with them in a positive, personal way. For instance, shortly after asking a student to move to another seat because of disruptive behavior, a teacher might mention later to the same student that he enjoyed reading a writing piece the student had turned in earlier that week. As Saphier and Gower (1997) explain, efforts to reconnect convey "the message that the teacher is not carrying a grudge, that the [teacher-student] relationship is still intact. This removes the tension...and gives the student an emotional entry back into the flow of activities" (pp. 348-349).
- **They connect with families.** They strengthen bonds with their students by strengthening their knowledge of and relationships with their students' families. They make concerted efforts to connect with parents during parent conferences, school events, by phone calls, or through home visits.

New Teachers

Research suggests that new teachers may feel lost when it comes to connecting with students. Many new teachers want to meaningfully bond with their students but are overwhelmed with learning their new job and thus have trouble finding time to connect with students individually. New teachers also often lack an intuitive understanding of how

to relate to children and their families, particularly those from different cultural backgrounds. Further, they receive little guidance in "relationship building" during either pre-service or in-service training. As a result, their attempts to reach out to students can appear awkward, even desperate, and when these efforts are not reciprocated by students—or in some cases, taken advantage of by students—they can be personally hurt, even disillusioned and angry ("These students don't care, so why should I?"). Moreover, in their eagerness to connect with students, new teachers can blur appropriate adult-student boundaries and thus often inadvertently undermine their position of authority in the classroom. For instance, a new teacher can often feel it is important to be considered "cool" by their students. Yet this level of interaction can signal to students that the teacher may be more permissive of certain behaviors (e.g., using inappropriate slang words). Further, when the teacher does need to exercise authority, students may feel that the teacher previously represented himself or herself in an insincere way. Thus, through their efforts to befriend students, new teachers often inadvertently create a distance between themselves and students (Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004; Tusin, 1995; Freeman, Brookhart, & Loadman, 1999; Humphrey, 2003; Bullough, Knowles, & Crow, 1991; Brock & Grady, 2001; Corley, 1998).

Responding to Student Misbehavior

While teachers can prevent many behavioral issues by establishing positive classroom climates, they must also be prepared to respond effectively to inappropriate student behavior when it does occur. How teachers intervene in these instances is a critical aspect of classroom management. Effective teachers respond in ways that quickly diffuse situations and get students back on task. Conversely, ineffective teachers—and commonly new teachers—respond in ways that exacerbate situations and in many cases establish patterns of problematic behavior that can persist over time.

Effective Teachers

A key trait among effective teachers is that when they take disciplinary action, they maintain an “emotional objectivity” (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003; Saphier & Gower, 1997). They remain poised and professional in demeanor, focusing on the specific behavior and not the personalities or “histories” of students. They are also careful not to personalize or “read too much into” the actions of students, by for instance showing disappointment or anger or prescribing malevolent motives to student actions (e.g., “the student is purposely trying to embarrass me in front of other students”).

Effective teachers are also skilled at matching disciplinary responses to both the seriousness of the misbehavior and the personality of the student(s) involved (Saphier & Gower, 1997; Curwin & Mendler, 1999; Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003; McLeod, Fisher, & Hoover, 2003). They are able to draw from a range of disciplinary responses, rather than one or a few rigid responses. For instance, a generally attentive student who is tapping a pencil out of nervous habit may require a simple, quick, verbal cue: “Sally, the pencil.” However, when another student who frequently invites power struggles with teachers and other authority figures begins tapping her pencil, the teacher may try a redirect and engagement approach: “Lisa, can you help me figure this out? What do you think is going to happen next in the story? Write down your prediction.”

Experienced/effective teachers are also skilled at diagnosing underlying causes and emotions driving student misbehavior (Saphier & Gower, 1997; Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003). They quickly assess the particular behavioral situation and student in question, reviewing a range of possible factors (e.g., the learning activity was too difficult or boring; the directions for an assignment were unclear; the student was embarrassed in front of his peers; the student craves attention from the

teacher; the student is anxious about external issues, such as threats from another student in the hallway). As a result, these teachers are then more adept at matching disciplinary responses to the situation and student.

Further, experienced/effective teachers are frequently versed in conflict resolution strategies (Johnson & Johnson, 1995; Saphier & Gower, 1997; Cummings, 2000). They can intercede quickly and confidently to de-escalate disputes that arise between students, walking them through various conflict resolution steps (e.g., recognizing/acknowledging anger; calming/collecting procedures; problem identification and perspective taking; brainstorming and developing a solution). The most effective teachers incorporate conflict resolution training into their curriculum and/or community-building activities with students, with the goal that children learn to successfully mediate disputes on their own.

New Teachers

Most new teachers simply do not have the level of insight or repertoire of strategies to respond in the ways that experienced/effective teachers do. They often rely on a few disciplinary responses that they apply indiscriminately to all students and situations. They frequently appear uncertain or “uncomfortable in their own skin” when taking disciplinary action and thus struggle to gain the attention and deference of students. They often react emotionally to affronts by students, expressing anger or frustration. Further, they rarely have familiarity with, or training in, conflict resolution strategies (Cattani, 2002; Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004; Corley, 1998; Dollase, 1992; Tusin, 1995).

Moreover, research suggests that new teachers commonly adhere to—or vacillate between—one of two problematic behavior management strategies (Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004; Metzger, 2002; Feinman-Nemser & Floden, 1986; Bullough, Knowles, & Crow, 1991;

Dollase, 1992; Corley, 1998). On the one hand, many new teachers believe the best way to manage and motivate students is to bond with them—that being liked and respected by students (“winning them over”) will engender their cooperation and compliance. They worry that if they appear too strict, students will dislike and turn against them. As a result, they are often hesitant to exercise their authority, and when they do, their disciplinary actions seem awkward and erratic. Students, in turn, perceive these teachers as weak and ineffectual and can be emboldened to test limits even further. Thus, for many new teachers, a “student-friendly” approach often diminishes, rather than improves, their influence in the classroom.

On the other hand, often new teachers, concerned with appearing competent to students, administrators and colleagues, feel it is critical to establish their authority in the classroom. As a result, these teachers are assertive with students, strictly enforcing classroom rules from the beginning. However, because of their inexperience, they often respond reflexively or misread disciplinary situations, using the same responses for both minor and serious misbehaviors and for different types of students. Moreover, because of their overinvestment in control, they are more likely to perceive student misbehavior as a personal challenge to their authority. In turn, they often respond to these perceived slights in ways that in and of themselves personalize conflict with students. (“Don’t mess with me. You’ll regret it.”) Students quickly come to view these teachers as harsh, unfair, and volatile, which can prompt the students to act out further. Thus, as with “student-friendly” teachers, “control-oriented” new teachers tend to exacerbate rather than diffuse problems in the classroom.

It is important to distinguish here between new teachers who are young in age and the increasing number of new teachers who are older, mid-career entrants. There is some evidence to suggest that

these more mature teacher entrants have less difficulty both in establishing authority and in responding to student behavior (Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004; Keagan, 1994). As parents, many of these new teachers frequently have greater knowledge of children’s development, as well as a set of behavior management strategies they have honed over many years. They also tend to be less conflicted about their position of authority in the classroom, both because of their role as parents and because many have served in leadership roles in their other careers. Further, they can discern more clearly when it is appropriate to be informal and personable with students and when to be firm and “business-like.” At the same time, students often more readily view older teacher entrants as authoritative figures. However, with that said, it is important for schools administrators and colleagues not to assume that older entrants will have an easier time with classroom management. Many, in fact, will require the same intensive guidance in this area that younger teacher entrants frequently need (Powers, 2002).

With the help of mentors and other colleagues and the benefit of trial and error, many new teachers come to peace with their role in establishing and maintaining appropriate limits in the classroom, perfect their disciplinary style, expand their repertoire of strategies, and, perhaps most importantly, develop a healthy perspective about the inevitability of student misbehavior. However, new teachers who fail in these respects are at great risk of emotional burnout and attrition. As Cattani (2002) explains:

New teachers, who may attract more than their fair share of challenging student behavior, must learn to respond calmly and firmly. The wisest will recognize inappropriate behavior as a part of the job and steel themselves

against being freshly offended or angry by students' reflexive defiance, recalcitrance or outright insubordination. A teacher who cannot stop the emotional drain of routine incidents will soon be flattened by the juggernaut of fatigue and frustration (p. 42).

***Problem Area Two:
Inability to Deal with Uncertainty***

A second important area of distinction between experienced/effective teachers and new teachers is their capacity to respond to the inherent uncertainty of student behavior. Regardless of skill level or experience, all teachers are susceptible to unpredictable student behavior (Lange & Burroughs-Lange, 1994; Floden & Clark, 1988). A student, for example, who had been responsive to a teacher's requests at one moment, may be distant or even confrontational at other times. A lesson activity that engaged students before may bore students on the second try. At other times, interpersonal dynamics between students, events outside of school/at home, or cultural misunderstandings can suddenly and chaotically spill out in classrooms without warning.

Research suggests that experienced teachers and new teachers respond differently to these types of situations (Lange & Burroughs-Lange, 1994; Floden & Clark, 1988; Cattani, 2002). Initially caught off guard, experienced teachers are quicker to regroup. It is likely that they have encountered the same—or a similar—situation before and thus have, in a sense, already been through a “dress rehearsal.” Thus, they are less flustered and more easily able to assess the situation, reflect on possible strategies, and change gears (e.g., modify a lesson that is going badly or react to a student's sudden verbal abuse calmly and dispassionately). In addition, they are able to reduce the level of uncertainty because of their stronger classroom management skills. For example, a veteran teacher is more likely to possess a higher

degree of situational awareness, allowing for early detection of potential problems (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003). They are also more likely to implement a range of well-thought-out routines (e.g., procedures for class discussions, going to and from recess, etc.) that script appropriate behavior, keep students on task, and minimize the amount of unstructured time (Floden & Clark, 1988; Saphier & Gower, 1997). Further, they are more likely to avoid unintended confrontations with students because of their ability to match disciplinary response with the particular circumstance and students involved.

For new teachers, the uncertainty of student behavior can exact a high toll (Dollase, 1992; Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004; Bullough, Knowles, & Crow, 1991; Veenman, 1984; Cattani, 2002). Whereas the experienced teacher is able to adjust in midstream to uncertainty, the new teacher is often thrown off balance and unable to recover (Tusin, 1995; Bullough, Knowles, & Crow, 1991). For instance, a new teacher who abruptly has a lesson activity rejected by his students (“That's stupid. I'm not doing it.”) can be emotionally staggered and unable to think of either a back-up activity or an effective way to achieve student participation. The teacher thus gives up on the lesson, allowing students to play quietly at their desks for the remainder of the class period.

Importantly, it is often not that new teachers are unfamiliar with or have not been trained in classroom management or instructional strategies to address problems, such as the one just described (though for many new teachers this also could be the case). It is more that they lack confidence both in their professional judgment and skills and in their status as an authority figure (Cattani, 2002; Floden & Clark, 1988; Veenman, 1984; Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004; Bullough, Knowles, & Crow, 1991; Corley, 1998). Thus, when the new teacher in the above example is challenged by his student, rather than using redirection or conflict resolution (e.g., “You're

not always going to find class activities interesting. Let's do this assignment now; we can discuss other ways to explore this subject afterward."'), he engages in second-guessing, questioning whether he should blame students for finding his lesson boring.

Some level of uncertainty is, of course, related to new teachers' inexperience with classroom management and instruction (Lange & Burroughs-Lange, 1994; Floden & Clark, 1988; Gratch, 1998b). For example, whereas a veteran teacher recognizes the need to develop routines for even the most mundane student activities (e.g., taking a water break, sharpening pencils, etc.), a new teacher might overlook such details, allowing for a considerable amount of unsupervised and unstructured time throughout the day. Similarly, by setting clear rules and effectively and consistently disciplining students who violate these rules, experienced teachers create safe learning environments and reduce stressors (e.g., a student feeling harassed and ridiculed by other students) that can precipitate problem behavior (CASEL, 2003; Kounin, 1970). In addition, teachers who are able to develop the capacity of students to manage their own behavior and solve age-appropriate interpersonal problems prevent a significant number of potential classroom disruptions. Thus, improving new teachers' classroom management skills and capacity to develop self-management skills among students can help alleviate behavioral uncertainty to some extent.

For the most part, however, uncertainty is an unavoidable way of life for new teachers that is often highly stressful and emotionally exhausting. It is common for new teachers to feel that things are "completely out of control," that they literally do not know what to expect from students from day to day (Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004; Bullough, Knowles, & Crow, 1991). For this reason, new teachers need more than management and instructional strategies. Perhaps more than anything, they need the perspective that only experienced colleagues

can provide—the understanding that a certain amount of uncertainty is both unpreventable and normal; that much of student behavior is simply impulsive (Cattani, 2002). Moreover, they also need veteran colleagues to model ways of dealing with uncertainty, sharing how they recompose themselves, reflect on the circumstances in any given situation, and develop appropriate responses. More concretely, new teachers would benefit from training in how to manage their emotions, remain poised, and apply problem-solving skills when faced with uncertainty in the classroom.

Problem Area Three: Lack of Cultural Awareness

A teacher's success in establishing relationships with students often requires more than strong interpersonal skills and a consistent, fair approach to classroom management. It also requires that teachers acknowledge the particular cultural experiences and perspectives of their students. Thus, a third area of distinction that often exists between experienced/effective teachers and new teachers is the level of cultural awareness or "cultural literacy." Particularly in urban school settings, several analysts argue that many new teachers approach their work from a white, middle-class cultural framework (Weinstein, Tomilson-Clarke, & Curran, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Weiner, 2000; Howard, 1999; Delpit, 1995). In other words, they teach by drawing from what they know: how they were themselves raised and taught in predominantly white, middle-class communities and colleges (Howard, 1999). This cultural framework carries with it pervasive assumptions, not only about how and what students should be taught, but also about how students should value and embrace learning, how students should respect and respond to the authority of teachers, and how students should treat their peers.

Confusion and conflict arise when these assumptions are not shared by students. Delpit (1995), for instance, argues that problems sometimes occur between white, middle-class teachers and

African-American students because of different perceptions of authority:

Black children expect an authority figure to act with authority. When the teacher instead acts like a “chum,” the message sent is that this adult has no authority, and the children act accordingly....Many people of color expect authority to be earned by personal efforts and exhibited by personal characteristics. In other words, “the authoritative person gets to be a teacher because she is authoritative.” Some members of middle-class cultures, by contrast, expect one to achieve authority by the acquisition of an authoritative role. That is, “the teacher is the authority because she is the teacher” (p. 35).

Further contributing to a cultural disconnect is that new teachers receive inadequate preparation in urban classroom teaching during pre-service training and have limited prior exposure to poor, minority urban communities (Howey, 2000; Howard, 1999; Ladson-Billings & Darling-Hammond, 1999). Many new teachers then arrive at urban schools unfamiliar with how their students live, how they view the world, what motivates them, how best to communicate learning goals to them, and how best to manage their behavior. As a result, new teachers have difficulty forming relationships with their students (Freeman, Brookhart, & Loadman, 1999). At worst, they may not respect or care sufficiently about their students to want to serve as their teachers (Haberman & Post, 1998).

Yet, at the same time many new teachers are successful—or become successful—teachers of urban/minority students. What distinguishes these teachers from others? More to the point, what can these teachers tell us about how better to prepare more new teachers for diverse, urban classrooms? Here, again, it is helpful to look at comparative

research of “effective” and “ineffective” teachers. For example, work by Ladson-Billings (1994, 2001), Haberman (1995), and others (Weinstein, Tomilson-Clarke, & Curran, 2004; Zeichner, 1993; Delpit, 1995; Ladson-Billings & Darling-Hammond, 1999; Haberman & Post, 1998; Guyton, 1994) have identified several distinguishing characteristics of effective urban/minority teachers. A summary of these characteristics is as follows:

- **They believe in the efficacy of their students.** They believe that all children can learn, they hold high expectations for both student work and behavior, and they continuously convey these expectations to students. Conversely, ineffective teachers hold low expectations for their students, and these expectations are transmitted to students in the form of unchallenging and/or prescriptive curriculum and authoritarian management approaches.
- **They acknowledge and convey interest in their students’ cultures.** They incorporate aspects of their students’ culture—whether “urban culture” or a racial/ethnic culture—into the classroom climate and curriculum. For instance, they might engage students in recording oral family history projects or in developing a plan for revitalizing the local community. At the same time, they view their students as individuals, not as representatives of a racial, ethnic, or social class group.
- **They have a sophisticated understanding of racial identity.** They reflect on their own cultural backgrounds, recognizing how their life and school experiences are similar and different from those of their students. Based on this understanding, they identify possible assumptions and misconceptions they might hold about student behavior and academic work. They also consider how their

curriculum and style of communication may be a source of confusion or disengagement among students.

- **They model an enthusiasm for learning.** In their curriculum, affect, and discourse with students, they demonstrate a “love for learning.” Haberman (1995), in particular, argues that this teaching trait is especially important for poor, urban children because they encounter with much less frequency adults who convey a genuine passion for learning, whether in school, at home, or in their community.
- **They are personable in approach.** Similar to teachers who are effective in establishing relationships with students, they develop

strong bonds with urban/minority students by presenting themselves as “real” people, appropriately showing emotions, expressing feelings, and admitting mistakes.

- **They have strong ideological beliefs that underpin their choice of profession.** Whether rooted in religious faith or born out of intensive life experience (e.g., participation in the Peace Corps), they have core convictions—commonly centered around themes of social justice—that instill an intense, unwavering commitment to the service of others, and that helps to sustain them through adverse teaching conditions.

SECTION TWO: RELATIONSHIPS AMONG COLLEAGUES

Beyond their work with students within the social-emotional environment of the classroom, new teachers are also immersed in the social-emotional context of the school at large. New teachers are affected by the overall professional climate or culture of particular schools and by their relationships with other adults in schools, whether relationships with administrators, colleagues in general, or staff designated to provide them with guidance and support, such as formal mentors.

Research suggests that both school professional climate and collegial relationships significantly influence the work experiences and career decisions of new teachers.

School Culture: The Importance of Colleagues

When new teachers begin working in the classroom, they are at the same time joining a particular school community, with a distinct organizational or professional culture. This culture consists of the range of both implicit and explicit norms and practices that shape how all teachers—new and experienced—view themselves as professionals, their expectations of students, the purposes of their interactions with colleagues, and their approaches to teaching and learning (Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, & Liu, 2001; Westheimer, 1998; Little, 1982 & 1990; Louis, Kruse, & Marks, 1996; Rosenholtz, 1989a). More than anything, a school's professional culture informs and is manifested in the various ways the adults in the school setting relate to one another. In other words, school culture is reflected in everything from casual conversations in the teacher's lounge, to the extent to which teachers collaborate around planning and professional development, to the presence and leadership style of the principal (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, & Liu, 2001; Johnson and Birkeland, 2003; Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1996).

To date, much of the research on school culture has been concerned with documenting the characteristics of different types of professional cultures. Several researchers draw distinctions between schools with collegial professional cultures and schools with independent or autonomous professional cultures (Talbert & McLaughlin, 2001; Hord, 1997; Lortie, 1975; Westheimer, 1998; Bryk, Lee, & Smith, 1990; Bryk & Schneider, 2002). In collegial cultures, there is an ethos of collaboration and shared responsibility, where teachers regularly plan curriculum in teams, co-teach classes, and reflect on teaching and learning in inquiry groups and other ongoing in-service activities. In autonomous cultures, there is an ethos of individualism, where teachers primarily work alone, meeting infrequently with colleagues to plan and discuss curriculum and instruction. A few studies go further, linking certain types of school cultures to different student learning outcomes. Louis, Kruse, and Marks (1996) and Lee and Smith (1995), for example, both found that schools characterized as professional learning communities demonstrated more substantial gains in student achievement when compared to schools with other types of professional cultures.

While emerging as an important area of study, research on the effects that professional school culture has directly on new teachers is limited. The most extensive work in this area has been conducted by Susan Moore-Johnson and her colleagues from the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Their research suggests that school culture can significantly shape the work experiences of new teachers and play an important role in their decision to stay in or to leave the profession. Based on in-depth interviews with 50 first-year and second-year public school teachers in Massachusetts, Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, & Liu (2001) were able to identify three types of professional cultures encountered by new teachers: veteran-oriented

professional cultures, novice-oriented professional cultures, and integrated professional cultures.

The first two of these cultures offer new teachers little professional guidance or organized forms of support. In schools with veteran-orientated cultures, for instance, new teachers reported being left alone or ignored, with their needs obscured by an organizational environment that heavily focused on the concerns of older, experienced teachers. Available mentoring in these schools was described as “mechanical” and non-intensive. In schools with novice-orientated cultures (best exemplified by charter schools), new teachers found themselves immersed in mission-driven programs with ambitious agendas and subsequently became overwhelmed with planning tasks and administrative roles. Because a majority of staff members were also inexperienced, these schools had little capacity to provide new teachers with assistance in key areas, such as instruction and classroom management. In contrast, teachers who worked in schools with integrated professional cultures reported high levels of engagement with colleagues. In these schools, the development of new teachers was a priority, owned by the entire community, and incorporated into the support activities in place for all teachers, such as common planning time, inquiry groups, and team teaching. Thus new teachers immediately felt included and supported as professional colleagues.

In a follow-up study, Johnson and Birkeland (2003) tracked the retention and attrition of the same 50 Massachusetts teachers. New teachers who worked in schools with integrated professional cultures were more likely to stay teaching in public schools than new teachers who worked in schools with either veteran-oriented cultures or novice-orientated cultures. They were also much more likely to remain in the same school during the two years of the study. Kardos (2002) reported similar results in her study of 110 first-year and second-year teachers from New Jersey where, again, new teachers working in

integrated professional cultures were more likely to both remain in the profession and teaching at their same schools, though teachers were only tracked over one year.

Although research on the impact of school culture on new teachers is limited, there are several studies that link collegial support with increased retention of new teachers. For instance, from their extensive review of induction programs, Smith and Ingersoll (2004) found that new teachers who participated in “collective induction activities,” such as new teacher support groups or regular professional development and planning with other teachers, were more likely to remain both at their current school and in the profession. Similarly, in his review of effective induction programs, Wong (2004) concluded that schools in which new teachers are provided with opportunities “to be part of networks or study groups where all teachers share together, grow together, and learn to respect each other’s work” (p. 5) are the most successful in keeping new teachers.

Key Professional Relationships

While support from colleagues is highly valued by new teachers, in many cases it is often two specific sources of support—administrators and mentors—that have the most consistent contact with new teachers, providing them with ongoing forms of support and thus most directly shaping their initial experience in schools (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; DePaul, 2000; Fidler & Haselkorn, 1999). In fact, research strongly suggests that positive relationships with administrators and mentors are key aspects of effective induction programs and have a significant influence on new teacher retention.

New Teachers and Administrators

National data on teacher turnover consistently points to administrative support as a key determinant of both job satisfaction and attrition among new teachers. From analysis of national

data on teacher turnover, Ingersoll (2001) found poor administrative support was the most frequently cited reason dissatisfied teachers gave for leaving, after low pay. Looking at the same data, Stockard and Lehman (2004) found that school management—along with social support from colleagues—had the most influence on teacher job satisfaction and retention. Regional surveys report similar trends. A study of former Tennessee teachers found that poor administrative support was the most frequently cited reason for leaving after child rearing (Tennessee P-16 Council, 2002). An earlier study of former North Carolina teachers reported similar results, with two-thirds of teachers citing lack of administrative support as a key reason for leaving (North Carolina Teaching Fellows Commission, 1995). Conversely, a study of hard-to-staff schools in Texas (Southeast Center for Teaching Quality, 2002) reported that new teachers were more likely to gravitate to and stay in those schools with strong and effective leadership.

While “administrative support” and “leadership” can refer to a range of things, several in-depth studies make clear the extent to which the support from principals affects new teachers and provide more insight concerning the types of administrative support new teachers find most meaningful. One key way principals help (or fail to support) new teachers is through the administrative decisions and policies they implement (or do not implement) prior to new teachers entering the classroom. They can, for instance, control classroom assignments to ensure that new teachers do not receive a disproportionate number of difficult students (DePaul, 2000; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Little, 1996). They can limit the number of administrative duties required of new teachers (Clement, 2000; Southeast Center for Teaching Quality, 2003). They can carefully select and assign mentors for new teachers and alter scheduling so that new teachers and mentors can meet regularly (Ganser, 2002; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Fideler & Haselkorn, 1999). Further, principals can oversee effective school-wide behavior management systems that establish clear

standards for student behavior, provide ongoing administrative support, and ensure uniform, consistent enforcement of these standards by all staff (Lewis & Sugai, 1999; Duke, 1989; Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004). Principals can offer direct behavior management support to new teachers by being visible (e.g., regularly visiting new teachers’ classrooms) and by facilitating more serious disciplinary actions (e.g., suspensions, restitution for damage to property, meetings with parents) (Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004; Brock & Grady, 2001).

Another critical form of assistance principals provide to new teachers is personal and emotional support. In their analysis of national data, Boe, Barkanic, and Leow (1999) found that teachers who stay teaching were almost four times more likely to strongly perceive their administrators as supportive and encouraging than teachers who left the classroom. In their reviews of new teacher induction programs, both Gold (1996) and Brock and Grady (1996) cited the initial relationship formed between new teachers and their principals as a key factor in whether teachers remained in the classroom. More recently, Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, and Liu (2001) found that principals were “central figures” to the new teachers they studied and that principals could be uninvolved, controlling, and intimidating, or, alternatively, attentive, “hands-on,” and accessible. Principals defined by these latter characteristics were more successful in retaining new teachers.

Lastly, principals support new teachers by fostering collegial school environments. Sclan (1993) found that a principal’s ability to promote collaborative work among teachers and broad involvement in decision making and curriculum development was linked to new teachers’ intent to remain in the profession. Similarly, Johnson and Birkeland (2003) and Kardos et al. (2001) found that principals who helped foster “integrated professional cultures” within their schools, characterized by high levels

of teacher collegiality and teamwork, created more supportive environments for new teachers and positively impacted their retention.

New Teachers and Mentors

For a growing number of new teachers, their transition to the classroom is supported through some form of mentoring. Mentoring for new teachers ranges from less intensive approaches, where mentors provide a basic orientation and periodically check in with new teachers, to more intensive models in which mentors guide new teachers' development across several pedagogical areas and observe and model instruction in classrooms. Mentoring models also range in duration, with some only spanning several months, while others last for several years (Fideler & Haselkorn, 1999; SRI International, 2000; Huling-Austin, 1992; Feinman-Nemser, 1996).

Empirical research on the impacts of mentoring programs is limited (Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004; Feinman-Nemser, 1996), though existing studies suggest that mentoring can be positively correlated with increased retention of new teachers. Ingersoll and Kralik (2004), for example, used rigorous criteria to identify 10 studies that provided convincing empirical evidence of mentoring's positive impact on teacher retention. Trend analysis of national teacher turnover data offers additional support for a strong association between mentoring and retention. Boser (2000), for example, found that beginning teachers who did not participate in any induction or mentoring programs were twice as likely to leave the classroom.

This research, however, does not offer much insight into which aspects of mentoring are most helpful to new teachers. In this regard, more in-depth studies of effective mentoring programs—including some of those reviewed by Ingersoll and Kralik (2004)—are informative. One key area mentoring programs help new teachers with is classroom management,

thus improving their relationships with students (Huling-Austin, 1989; Schaffer, Stringfield, & Wolfe, 1992). The majority of studies, however, identify the emotional support mentors provide to new teachers as an essential factor influencing their retention—in many cases considered more important than help in other areas, such as classroom management and instruction. For instance, in their study of a successful mentoring program in New Mexico, Odell and Ferraro (1992) found that new teachers most valued the emotional support they received from their mentors. Similarly, Abell, Dillon, Hopkins, McNerney, & O'Brien (1995) reported that the most important role of mentors, as perceived by both the mentors and the new teachers they studied, was to provide emotional support and to serve as a trusted colleague. Colbert and Wolff (1992) found that a key factor behind the success of a mentoring program in Los Angeles was the selection of mentors who had the capacity to be nurturing and nonjudgmental. Further, Gold (1996), Feinman-Nemser, Carver, Schwille, and Yusko (1999), and Stansbury and Zimmerman (2000) all conclude that successful mentoring programs provide high quality "psychological support" (Gold, 1996) as well as instructional support.

Why Are Adult Relationships So Important?

Given that the social and emotional support from other adults is regarded so highly by new teachers and has such a significant impact on whether they choose to remain in the classroom, the next consideration is to understand why this support is so important. In other words, how exactly do administrators, mentors, and colleagues socially and emotionally support new teachers?

On the most basic level, new teachers need other adults with whom they share an affinity, who they trust and can confide in with their problems, and who offer a range of personal and professional support, for example, sympathy, humor, advice, and so on (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000; Gold,

1996). Beyond individual relationships, new teachers need to feel an overall sense of belonging or connectedness to their school community—that they are valued by and have been accepted into a community of like-minded professional peers. From resiliency research on children, we know that a strong feeling of connection to a social support group (e.g., families, peer groups, athletic teams, churches, etc.) can serve as a critical protective factor against adversity (Resnick, Harris, & Blum, 1993; Osterman, 2000). Similarly, new teachers are much more likely to endure stressful situations if they feel strongly linked to and supported by administrators and colleagues (Gold, 1996; Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004). Negative interactions with students, difficult exchanges with parents, and feelings of self-doubt and inadequacy all become more bearable if new teachers believe they are not going through these experiences alone, but rather are braced by the companionship, empathy, and wisdom of coworkers. This last point cannot be overstated enough: instilling this outlook in new teachers is critical to their retention. In other words, keeping new teachers depends upon the collective compassion and concern of numerous adults in schools, not just principals or mentors. Thus, the community of veteran teachers in schools plays an important role in the lives of new teachers. The more aware and accepting of this role the community is, the better the prospects for new teachers.

In addition to the overall social and emotional climate of the classroom and school, closer examination of the research on new teachers highlights further, more acute individual social-emotional issues often faced by new teachers during their first few years that frequently require help from administrators and colleagues. These issues are interrelated in that one often precipitates another. At any given time, new teachers can be wrestling with one or several of these issues. Moreover, any one of these issues on their own, if unresolved, can be debilitating for new teachers and thus a driving

force behind their attrition (Gold, 1996). Specifically, these issues are as follows:

Coping with the Initial, Survival Stage of Teaching

Within the teacher development literature, there is general consensus that teachers progress through distinct professional life stages, gradually moving from a primary focus on daily survival to a primary focus on teaching and learning (Fuller, 1969; Huberman, 1989; Huling-Austin, 1986; Feinman-Nemser & Remillard, 1995; Saphier & Gower, 1997). In terms of the initial survival stage, this literature paints a consistent picture. Regardless of the quality and intensity of their pre-service experience or their age (e.g., mid-career entrants), when new teachers enter the classroom they face a steep learning curve—an often grueling process of trial and error—that leaves them feeling insecure and unconfident in their decision-making, instruction, and management skills. The transition from the sheltered experience of student teaching to the role of professional teacher, responsible for the care and education of 30 or more students, is jarring. They receive the same teaching load as their more experienced colleagues and often receive the most difficult students (DePaul, 2000; Little, 1996). They must learn a range of administrative tasks and local and state curriculum frameworks and assessments (Kaufman, Moster, Trent, & Halloran, 2002; Humphrey, 2003; Johnson, Kardos, et al., 2004). Moreover, many new teachers join schools with autonomous professional cultures, where the teachers largely work in isolation, have minimal interaction with colleagues, and are left to fend for themselves in an unstated, but implied, “sink or swim” initiation process (Kardos et al., 2001; Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1996; Little, 1990; Rosenholtz, 1989b; Lortie, 1975).

The heightened insecurity inherent in this initial stage often precipitates additional problems for new teachers (Thies-Sprinthall & Gerler, 1990; Gold & Roth, 1993). For instance, it can cause new teachers to be overly concerned with appearing competent.

As a result, these teachers neglect to seek help from administrators and colleagues, worrying that this would signal weakness (Gold, 1996). In fact, they may even go to great lengths to cover up serious problems and hide emotional stress. Intense insecurity can also cause new teachers to place too much emphasis on being liked by students. As discussed earlier, because of their inexperience, new teachers' efforts to befriend students often end up compromising their authority in the classroom, leading to a host of other difficulties with students.

Thus, the first stage for new teachers (the "survival stage") can be perilous. New teachers often report feeling that both they and their classrooms are out of control. Without recognition and adequate intervention from administrators and colleagues, this stage can cause burnout and early departure among new teachers—even the most talented and committed new teachers (Hare & Heap, 2001).

Loss of Idealism (or "Reality Shock")

New teachers typically arrive with very idealized notions about their roles as teachers and how they will be received by students, parents, and colleagues (Veenman, 1984; Gold, 1996; Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004; Gordon & Maxey, 2000; Guyton, 1994; Moir, 1990; Humphrey, 2003). For instance, many new teachers enter the profession because they want to "make a difference" in the lives of children or "make the world a better place" (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; MetLife, Inc., 2001; Guyton, 1994). New teachers also look forward to working with colleagues who share the same vision and passion for teaching and who are highly collaborative and supportive (Kardos et al., 2001).

What many new teachers encounter in reality is altogether different: students who are unresponsive, even rude or hostile; parents who are uninvolved or critical; administrators who are overbearing or not present; colleagues who are cynical and distant; curricular and testing mandates that are onerous;

and facilities and resources that are inadequate. This "reality shock" (Veenman, 1984) can profoundly disillusion new teachers and trigger depression and feelings of inadequacy and anger ("What's wrong with these kids?"). While many new teachers rebound, developing a more practical perspective of their work, others do not and come to view themselves and their efforts as ineffectual and irrelevant.

Coping with Personal Life Changes

In recent years, with the advent of "fast-track," alternative certification initiatives (e.g., Teach for America) and mid-career training programs, the demographic patterns among those entering the teaching profession have shifted considerably. In addition to traditional teacher entrants in their early to mid-twenties who complete undergraduate teacher training programs or Master of Education programs, there has been a marked increase in the number of older, mid-career entrants, those ranging in age from their late twenties to early sixties (Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004; SRI International., 2000; Novak & Knowles, 1992). With this development, the social and emotional issues among new teachers have become more diverse, as the personal challenges faced by young teacher entrants often differ in substantive ways from those faced by older teacher entrants.

For young teacher entrants, their first teaching assignment often coincides with other major life changes, such as moving to a new community, getting married, and starting a family (Williams, 2001; Humphrey, 2003; Cattani, 2002). They often find themselves separated from established support networks (e.g., family members, college friends, churches, etc.). In the case of recent college graduates, their teaching position is often their first professional experience of any kind. Contending with these personal changes while adjusting to their new job can be overwhelming and emotionally draining (Williams, 2001). Many young teachers feel

repeatedly conflicted about their work and family responsibilities. As neophyte, often struggling teachers, they feel obligated to “put in the extra time” to improve and often stay late and come in on weekends. Without guidance in how to balance their professional and personal lives effectively, these teachers can quickly become overworked and burned out.

On the other side of the spectrum, older teacher entrants contend with a different set of personal challenges when they begin in the classroom. With respect to their relationships with students, older entrants commonly find that, despite their maturity and experiences raising children of their own, they face the same difficulties managing and motivating students as those faced by younger new teachers (Powers, 2002). Yet, in many instances, school administrators and colleagues frequently presume that older entrants need less support in these areas and thus either check in with them less often or do not include significant training in these areas as part of mentoring or professional development for older entrants. Thus, older entrants can often become emotionally exhausted on two levels: not only is their actual struggle to manage classrooms draining, but the sense that they are failing to live up to the expectation that they are competent in this area is fatiguing as well.

With respect to the larger school context, having worked extensively in other professional settings, older entrants are often more troubled than younger entrants by how schools function as organizations (Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004). Coming from professional backgrounds in law, business, finance, technology, and scientific research, they can be taken aback by the poor conditions and scarce resources in many schools. Older entrants who have served in leadership positions can also be more attuned to and bothered by the leadership shortcomings of school administrators (Powers, 2002). The authoritarian

structure and lack of teacher involvement in decision making in many schools can be troubling to older entrants (Powers, 2002). Further, for those who formerly worked in team-oriented professional cultures, the lack of cooperation and collegiality among school staff can be especially disheartening.

Though they more readily recognize and are bothered by the flaws of school settings, many older entrants often contribute to their own difficulties transitioning to the classroom. With extensive past professional lives, they arrive with firmly established work habits, patterns, and organizational expectations that can make them less flexible and adaptable to the varying pace and circumstances in schools (Knowles & Sudzina, 1991; Madfes, 1989). For instance, they are often more easily frustrated by scheduling changes, behavioral interruptions that delay lessons, or copy machines that break down.

Crisis of Professional Identity

Often in conjunction with one or more of the emotional issues outlined above, new teachers can undergo a crisis of professional identity. Waves of self-doubt, disillusionment, and the overall stress of teaching converge, prompting new teachers to question whether they made the right career choice—whether they are “cut out for this work” (Gold, 1996; Guyton, 1994; Veenman, 1984). They aren’t sure what they are good at anymore, what they are best suited to do for work. They worry too that as teachers they are doing students a disservice, that they are poor stewards of their learning (Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004; Cattani, 2002). Thus, they begin to heavily reconsider teaching as a profession.

Recent research by the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers points to another, emerging source of professional second-guessing among new teachers. Unlike in the past, there is evidence that many of today’s new teachers arrive in

schools already with tenuous commitments to the profession. Peske, Liu, Johnson, Kauffman, and Kardos (2001), for example, found that a majority of new teachers they interviewed looked upon teaching not as a long-term commitment (as a “calling”) as did previous generations of teachers, but as short-term employment—something they would do for a few years before trying something else. These teachers were also more likely to enter into teaching on a “trial basis”—considering their teaching job as something to be tested out and stayed with if they enjoyed it. In addition, Liu (2002) found that many

new teachers enter the field despite a perceived “opportunity cost” in choosing teaching over other, higher-paying professions. Because of this concern, these teachers were also less likely to commit to teaching long term—feeling it is important to leave open the option that they may have to leave in a few years to pursue more lucrative jobs. Thus, between new conceptions of teaching as temporary work and the inherent emotional issues over the first few years of teaching, the number of new teachers experiencing some form of professional identity crisis may be on the rise.

SECTION THREE: REVIEW OF EXISTING EFFORTS

While efforts specifically developed to help new teachers address social-emotional challenges in their work are limited, there are several teacher education and induction program models that do focus on these challenges. This section profiles some of these teacher education and induction programs, while at the same time considering where gaps still remain in supporting new teachers with respect to the social-emotional context of teaching. Lastly, this section concludes by considering how social emotional learning (SEL) programs could offer new forms of assistance for beginning teachers in meeting these challenges.

Teacher Education Programs

In recent years—and perhaps more so today with the passing of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the heightened emphasis on student achievement—teacher preparation has primarily centered on the development of content knowledge and instructional skill of prospective teachers (NCTAF, 1996; Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001). Often, as a result, teacher education programs have focused less on preparing prospective teachers to address social-emotional aspects of work in schools (Kassem, 2002; Gold, 1996). For instance, new teachers and administrators commonly cite inadequate preparation in classroom management as a shortcoming of pre-service training (Farkas, Johnson & Foleno, 2000; Johnson, Kardos, et al., 2004; Gee, 2001; Corley, 1998, Gratch, 1998b). Others criticize teacher education programs for providing limited training in cultural awareness (Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Howey, 2000; Haberman & Post 1998; Ladson-Billings & Darling-Hammond, 1999; Delpit, 1995). Further, the objective of fostering quality relationships between new teachers and other adults in school settings is not historically considered the responsibility—or within the capacity—of teacher education programs (NCTAF, 1996; Kirby et al., 2004).

However, there are exceptions. Several teacher education programs seek to adequately prepare prospective teachers to meet the challenges of managing classrooms, connecting with students, and teaching culturally diverse students. They also make initial attempts to foster norms of collegiality among teachers by structuring collaborative experiences among prospective teachers. Some of these exemplary teacher education programs include the following:

Boston Teacher Residency Program

The Boston Teacher Residency (BTR) program is an intensive, one-year urban teacher preparation run jointly by the Boston Public Schools and the Boston Plan for Excellence. The BTR places “teacher residents” in Boston Public Schools where they co-teach with skilled mentor teachers and complete coursework facilitated by both expert teachers and university faculty. Several elements of the BTR model are designed to offer teacher residents experience in and support with social-emotional aspects of their work. These include the following:

- **Hands-on experience with students.**
The BTR’s immersion approach to teacher training offers residents extensive experience and real-time, on-site coaching in both managing and relating to students. As co-teachers, they share responsibility for all aspects of classroom management, such as establishing classroom climate and disciplining students. At the same time, they receive instant feedback and guidance from their veteran co-teacher on their effectiveness in these areas. As a result, BTR residents enter the profession already having gone through considerable trial, error, and growth in these areas.

- **Cultural awareness training.** BTR residents complete a seminar on “Building a Culture of Achievement.” This seminar explores issues of culture and class and reviews effective teaching strategies for culturally and academically diverse students. In addition, BTR residents are encouraged to partner with families and to see family members as “valuable assets” in their efforts to motivate and teach students.
- **Collaborative structures.** BTR residents are grouped into teams or “cohorts” that are placed together at one school. Facilitated by a site director, these cohorts meet regularly to collaboratively plan lessons, complete course assignments, and problem solve, as well as to offer each other peer support. In addition, all BTR residents across cohorts attend monthly seminars where they reflect on practice and share problems and concerns. Both of these structures are intended to develop an appreciation in residents for the value of collegial support and collaborative work. Moreover, they are intended to provide residents with a framework for duplicating these processes once the residents enter the profession. Finally, BTR staff work with each site director to create a school-wide commitment to BTR residents—a readiness among administrators and all teachers to embrace and support BTR residents.
- **Emotional monitoring.** BTR site directors and co-teachers are charged with monitoring both the instructional development and the social-emotional well-being of teacher residents. They routinely check in with residents, addressing issues such as difficulty with students, lack of confidence, or emotional and physical exhaustion.

(Source: personal phone conversation with Jesse Solomon, BTR Director, March 25, 2005; Solomon, n.d.)

Center X: Teacher Education Program, UCLA

The Center X Teacher Education Program is a collaborative initiative between the University of California Los Angeles, School of Education and the Los Angeles Unified School District to prepare exceptional urban teachers. In addition to training in content and instruction, the Center X program seeks to select and prepare new teachers who can successfully meet the social-emotional challenges of work in diverse, urban school settings. To this aim, specific program components include the following:

- **Screening for the “right fit.”** “Teacher interns” are selected using specific criteria to identify candidates who demonstrate a strong commitment to “social justice, instructional excellence, and caring in low-income urban schools.” Evidence of such commitment suggests to Center X faculty that candidates have both an outlook and an aptitude suited for the intellectual and emotional challenges of working in urban, culturally diverse school settings.
- **Cultural awareness training.** Teacher interns are required to complete an intensive “Community Project,” designed to expand their understanding of the urban communities they will work in and the students they will teach. Specific components of the Community Project include: preparing a descriptive overview of urban communities; interviewing students, parents, and community members; and profiling a community organization. In addition, teacher interns complete the

following coursework: Teaching in Urban Schools; Social Foundations and Cultural Diversity in American Education; and Language and Culture.

- **Personal reflection.** Teacher interns keep “dialogue journals” with their supervising teacher. In these journals they are encouraged to share and discuss both professional and social-emotional challenges they contend with during their pre-service training.
- **Collaborative structures.** Teacher interns are grouped into teams, which are then placed together at one school site to complete required team projects. As with the BTR model, a primary objective of these teams is to develop norms of collegiality and collaboration among prospective teachers. (Source: Center X, 2004, Community project; Center X, n.d., Center X mission statement; Center X, n.d. Program overview)

Induction Programs

Research suggests that effective induction provides new teachers not only with instructional support, but also with considerable social-emotional support. The level of social-emotional support new teachers receive is contingent on the quality of their relationships and the extent of their collaboration with administrators, mentors, and other colleagues. With that said, most induction programs fall far short of establishing such relationships. For instance, mentors are often poorly selected and trained, mismatched with new teachers, and given inadequate time to provide intensive, in-class mentoring support (Kardos, 2002; Saphier, Freedman, & Aschier, 2001; SRI International, 2000; Murray, 2001; Gratch, 1998a; Feinman-Nemser & Parker, 1993). And principals are frequently uninvolved with new teachers or, alternatively,

overbearing and punitive (Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, & Liu, 2001; Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1996; Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004).

However, several induction programs recognize the importance of strong collegial relationships for new teachers and attempt to foster meaningful collaboration between new teachers and their administrators, mentors, and colleagues. At the same time, these induction programs seek to improve the ability of new teachers to manage and relate to students by providing training and ongoing support in classroom management. Some of these exemplary programs include the following:

Collaborative Mentoring: Goldfarb Elementary School, Nevada/ Montview Elementary, Colorado

The Goldfarb Elementary School in Las Vegas, Nevada, and the Montview Elementary School in Aurora, Colorado, are both nationally recognized schools for their success in promoting the academic achievement of culturally diverse students. Moreover, these schools stand out because of their effectiveness in supporting and retaining new teachers. A key to their success in these areas is that both schools share the same, unique approach to mentoring: they have no formal mentors. Instead, support and mentoring for new teachers are viewed as school-wide responsibilities. Specific strategies used by these schools include the following:

- **Engaging all teachers as mentors.** When new teachers arrive at Goldfarb Elementary School, administrators assess their individual strengths and weaknesses. Once areas of need are identified, they are “publicized” to the entire teaching community, as a call for assistance. A majority of Goldfarb’s veteran teachers responds, offering to answer questions, meet regularly with new teachers, or

share and problem solve with both new and experienced teachers during in-house seminars.

- **Engaging all teachers as learners.** As part of an ongoing staff development effort to improve literacy and math instruction, all teachers at Montview Elementary are immersed in an intensive, collaborative coaching model. When new teachers arrive at Montview, they are quickly integrated into this process, participating in weekly coaching sessions with their colleagues where they analyze student data, reflect on practice, and set improvement goals. These sessions are facilitated by “teacher leaders”—experienced teachers and staff developers. For new teachers, these teacher leaders often serve as mentor figures. But through the collaborative coaching process, new teachers also draw upon the experience and support of many colleagues. Further, as required of all Montview teachers, new teachers review their student’s learning progress quarterly with a leadership team: administrators, their teacher leader, and a team of resource specialists (e.g., reading specialist, occupational therapists, etc.). Following this review, the teacher and leadership team often engage in joint problem solving, considering possible strategies for helping certain students and identifying resources within the school or through outside professional development activities that the teacher should pursue. (Source: Wong, 2003; U.S. Department of Education, 1998; personal phone conversation with Annie Stamper, Vice Principal, Montview Elementary, April 4, 2005)

Santa Cruz New Teacher Project, California

The Santa Cruz New Teacher Project (SCNTP) is

a well-regarded teacher induction program run collaboratively by the Teacher Education Program at the University of California, Santa Cruz and the Santa Cruz County Office of Education. The SCNTP provides both instructional and social-emotional support with the stated goal to “nurture both the heart and mind of every first- and second-year teacher.” Specific components of the SCNTP model that focus on social-emotional support for new teachers include the following:

- **High quality mentoring.** New teachers are provided with intensive mentoring during their first two years. Mentors or “advisors” are selected based on their exceptional instructional knowledge and skills as well as their capacity to form trusting relationships with colleagues and offer emotional support. Released full-time from their teaching responsibilities, advisors meet with new teachers weekly on-site to observe, oversee lesson planning, and provide coaching in instruction and classroom management. Advisors also facilitate the involvement of principals, ensuring that new teachers develop relationships with and receive ongoing support from principals. Further, advisors and new teachers maintain an “interactive journal” to improve communication, share professional and personal concerns, and discuss possible ways to address these concerns.
- **Mentor training in social-emotional support.** As part of their ongoing professional development, advisors receive specific training in how to provide new teachers with social-emotional support. This training includes familiarizing advisors with the developmental phases and common psychological issues of new teachers. It also includes preparation in how to create safe feedback structures for new teachers, in which they are given opportunities

to disclose personal issues and receive supervision and support in nonjudgmental ways.

- **Collaborative structures.** New teachers attend monthly seminars with other new teachers in their school and across the district. These seminars prepare new teachers to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students more effectively. At the same time, they are designed to establish a peer support network and to foster ongoing collaborative learning and reflection among teachers. (Source: Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004; Moir, Gless, & Baron, 1999; Moir, 1990; U.S. Department of Education, n.d.)

LaFourche Parish Schools, Louisiana

The LaFourche Parish Schools' Framework for Inducting, Retaining, and Supporting Teachers (FIRST) program is a highly successful new teacher induction program with annual retention rates of more than 90%. Developed in 1996, the FIRST program is now the statewide model in Louisiana for inducting new teachers. Prominent in the FIRST model are several elements that focus on social-emotional factors important to new teachers. These elements include the following:

- **Advance training and support.** Prior to starting at their schools, new teachers participate in a highly structured four-day summer institute. During this institute, new teachers comprehensively review effective instruction and classroom management methods, including rule setting, routines, and time management strategies. New teachers also meet and form initial relationships with mentors who will work with them during the next two years. They also meet members of the "induction team" at their schools, which, in addition to their mentor, includes three curriculum coordinators and their principal. This team will serve as a key,

accessible support network for new teachers during the next two years.

- **Multiple mentors and collaboration.** Throughout the year, new teachers receive multiple forms of mentoring and supervision. They meet several times per week with mentors; once a month on-site with curriculum coordinators; and once a month at the district level with other new teachers in a peer support group, where they are encouraged to share both successes and concerns, exchange curricular ideas, and collaboratively problem solve common issues. In addition, they observe their mentors and are observed in return by mentors, curriculum coordinators, and principals. Finally, they participate in three full days of intensive professional development, focusing again on establishing effective classroom management and instruction skills. (Source: Pardini, 2002; Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004; Wong, 2003)

Remaining Gaps

While the teacher education and induction programs profiled in this report offer new teachers promising strategies for contending with many of the social-emotional challenges of their work, there are some noticeable gaps—aspects of new teachers' relationships with adults and students that remain relatively unaddressed. One concern is that, other than traditional forms of mentoring, most teacher education and induction programs provide limited opportunities for new teachers to partner with and learn from a variety of colleagues across schools (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004; Saphier, Freedman, & Aschier, 2001; Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004). While several teacher education and induction programs organize cohorts or peer support teams that unite new and prospective teachers with other new and prospective teachers, very few programs create collaborative structures that bring these teachers together with experienced colleagues in intensive,

ongoing ways—with the noted exceptions of the Goldfarb Elementary and Montview Elementary induction models.

Another concern is that training provided by induction programs in classroom management is often piecemeal, delivered in sporadic installments throughout the year. In addition, the classroom management approaches reviewed, whether a collection of strategies passed on by veteran teachers or a school's adopted curriculum model (e.g., Assertive Discipline), tend to be traditional in that they emphasize, above all else, controlling student behavior. New teachers thus can often infer that good teaching is defined by the level of control they exercise over students (Edwards, 1994). Moreover, these approaches place the onus for controlling behavior almost entirely on teachers and thus minimize students' responsibility for managing their own behavior.

A last area of concern is that little work is done by either teacher education or induction programs to prepare new teachers to more effectively address uncertainty in student behavior. While a certain degree of uncertainty is unavoidable, prospective and new teachers could benefit from a review of various behavioral scenarios (e.g., suddenly oppositional students) with faculty and experienced colleagues, considering how in these instances teachers might anticipate problems and respond to student actions.

The Promise of Social and Emotional Learning

In recent years, SEL programs and approaches have been embraced by an increasing number of schools (CASEL, 2003). SEL is the process of developing the skills, attitudes, and values to successfully manage important life tasks, such as forming and maintaining positive relationships, solving everyday problems, and responding to the demands of life. Core social and emotional competencies include

self-awareness, recognizing and managing impulses and emotions, communications skills, perspective taking, responsible decision making, appreciating diversity, and caring about oneself and others (U.S. Department of Education, 2003; Elias, et al., 1997; CASEL, 2003; CASEL, 2005). Research has increasingly demonstrated social and emotional competence to be tied to academic achievement (Zins, Weissberg, Wang, & Walberg, 2004) and has shown it to be a stronger predictor of success later in life than IQ (Goleman, 1995).

Scientific research has demonstrated the effectiveness of a growing number of school-based SEL programs. SEL programs have been shown to increase the likelihood that children will be pro-social, engage in fewer problem behaviors, and demonstrate a stronger attachment to school (Taylor, Liang, Tracy, Williams, & Seigle, 2002; Battistich, Schaps, & Wilson, 2004; McNeely, Nonnemaker, & Blum, 2002; Zins, Weissberg, Wang, & Walberg, 2004; Pittman, 2001; Solomon, Battistich, Watson, Schaps, & Lewis, 2000; Grossman, et al., 1997). While many SEL programs feature structured curricula and lesson plans designed to foster social and emotional competency, others also focus on school and classroom climate and are designed to foster a social environment in which students are more likely to experience and practice SEL in action (CASEL, 2003).

SEL programs have also shown promise in improving teacher skills and working conditions. For instance, studies have shown that training in SEL enhances teachers' ability to connect with students, manage classrooms, create positive learning environments, and, in some cases, relate more effectively with colleagues (CASEL, 2003; Elias, Bruene-Butler, Blum, & Schuyler, 2000; Goleman, 1998; Rimm-Kaufman & Sawyer, 2004).

Effective SEL Models

A comprehensive review of SEL programs has been compiled by the Collaborative for Academic, Social

and Emotional Learning (CASEL), an organization formed to enhance children's success in school and life by promoting coordinated, evidence-based social, emotional, and academic learning as an essential part of education. From a review of 80 SEL programs, CASEL has identified 22 "select" programs that met criteria including well-crafted, sequenced curriculum and sound instruction strategies; scientific evidence of effectiveness; and ongoing, on-site support for implementation (CASEL, 2003).

Relevance for New Teachers

Because of their potential to improve students' social and emotional competency and to enhance classroom and school climate, SEL programs offer a valuable resource to all teachers. However, SEL programs are especially salient for new teachers in that they offer a coherent framework and set of strategies for addressing many of the critical issues of social-emotional context new teachers encounter. More specifically, SEL programs could provide new teachers with the following benefits:

A Proactive, Preventative Approach to Managing Classrooms

An overarching principle of SEL programs—and what sets them apart from other, traditional classroom management models—is that they aim not just to train teachers how to control student behavior more effectively but, more importantly, to train teachers in developing students' capacity to control their own behavior more effectively (Payton et al., 2000; Elias et al., 1997; Goleman, 1995). For instance, a student trained in recognizing and managing her emotions is able to control her anger at another student who skips ahead of her in line. Or, students trained in problem-solving strategies are able to negotiate sharing a computer by themselves, rather than needing the teacher's help. In this way, SEL training helps students address behavioral issues on their own, thus preventing many behavioral issues

from becoming larger problems and requiring the attention of teachers. Moreover, this approach fosters shared responsibility among teachers and students for managing behavior and creating positive classroom climates and moves away from traditional approaches, in which teachers are solely responsible for these areas. In the long run, SEL approaches hold promise for reducing the amount of time teachers spend addressing behavioral problems and enabling them to create a classroom environment in which students are more able to learn and teachers are more able to teach.

Well-Designed Curriculum for Fostering Social-Emotional Competencies

While many new teachers draw from a range of ad hoc sources to develop strategies for helping students to become well-functioning members of the classroom and broader community, effective SEL programs provide and train teachers in research-based curriculum and instructional strategies and promote core competencies (CASEL, 2003; Payton et al., 2000), for example, recognizing and managing emotions, empathy, perspective taking, problem solving/conflict resolution, and communications skills. This curriculum is organized and well sequenced; lessons and skill development in one set of competencies naturally builds toward lessons and development in a next set of competencies. Some SEL curriculums also include lessons and classroom activities designed to promote appreciation of and sensitivity toward cultural differences. Thus, in addition to improving student competencies, SEL programs can provide teachers with models for promoting cultural sensitivity through curriculum and instruction.

Effective Methods for Enhancing Classroom Climate and Disciplining Behavior

Some effective SEL programs equip teachers with strategies for "building community" and fostering positive learning environments, such as strategies

for establishing rules, developing routines, and managing transitions (CASEL, 2003). They may also provide training in facilitating class meetings, a valuable component for creating community and a highly effective medium for modeling respect for and cooperation with others, discussing social themes, fostering student engagement, and communicating both academic and behavioral goals and expectations.

Consistent, School-Wide Approaches to Behavior

Schools that adopt effective SEL programs on a school-wide basis establish a consistent approach and common language among administrators, teachers, and other staff concerning expectations for student behavior, ways of promoting positive behavior, and responses to behavior that violates these expectations. Where there is greater consistency in response to student behavior across classrooms, school settings (e.g., cafeteria, schoolyard), and among staff, there is often a reduction in problem behaviors, such as violence, vandalism, and bullying (Duke, 1989; Twemlow et al., 2001; Lewis & Sugai, 1999).

In schools that take a proactive SEL approach to school climate, there are shared norms school-wide and a common set of goals, which can result in respectful engagement in the life of the school community by students and teachers alike. These shared norms and approaches can make for smoother transitions to and from activities such as special subjects, lunch, and recess—often times when the most challenging student behavior may occur.

In addition, when schools use an effective SEL program consistently over time, new teachers beyond the youngest grades will receive students who are likely to already have stronger social and emotional capacities that make them more able and

inclined to be contributing members of a positive classroom community.

All of this is of particular benefit to new teachers. And, as discussed earlier, new teachers arrive with unformed, often misguided, ideas about how to manage students. They rely heavily on what they infer from administrators and colleagues are the preferred and effective behavior management strategies (Corley, 1998). Thus, schools with clear, sound approaches to fostering positive behavior that are uniformly applied by staff provide new teachers with an optimal environment for learning both how to create a conducive classroom climate and how to respond appropriately to student misbehavior.

High-Quality Implementation Support

Some of the most effective SEL programs provide teachers with well-designed training and ongoing implementation support (CASEL, 2003; Payton et al., 2000). Staff trainers from these programs commonly work on-site with teams of administrators and teachers, reviewing curriculum theory and content, modeling strategies in classrooms, and observing and coaching teachers as they implement strategies. Staff trainers also facilitate regular reflection and problem-solving activities among groups of teacher trainees. This type of ongoing support could be of particular importance to new teachers. By working with new teachers individually or bringing them together with other teachers, SEL staff trainers could supplement induction and mentoring efforts and thus help schools provide the multiple forms of support that Smith and Ingersoll (2004) suggest significantly increases retention.

Parallel Process: Developing Teachers' Social-Emotional Competencies

Some effective SEL programs also recognize that, in order to increase teachers' abilities to promote and model social-emotional skills to students, teachers themselves must examine and, in many cases, strengthen their own social-emotional competencies.

Thus, a number of SEL programs engage teachers in both self-exploration and social-emotional skill development activities.

For instance, an SEL staff trainer might work with teachers on emotional self-awareness, having them identify ways in which their emotions may influence their perceptions of and response to students or colleagues. The same staff trainer might later work with teachers on perspective-taking or empathy skills, by asking them to consider how their students, including students with whom they have the most difficulty, might perceive them. Still other sessions might focus on strengthening teachers' active listening and communications skills.

Given their particular struggles with managing and relating to students, new teachers stand to benefit from this type of training in several ways. More insight into how underlying emotions drive behavior could help new teachers understand that their insecurity is what underlies their need to feel liked by students (Vonk, 1995; Featherstone, 1992). Similarly, increased consciousness of how their actions might be perceived by students and, conversely, how they perceive—or misperceive—students' actions could help new teachers more carefully frame disciplinary responses (Weinstein, Tomilson-Clarke, & Curran, 2004; Delpit, 1995). Further, training in active listening and communications skills—skills that research suggests are exhibited by teachers who are effective in building relationships with students—could greatly enhance new teachers' abilities to connect with their students (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Saphier & Gower, 1997).

At the same time, improving new teachers' abilities to manage their emotions and perceive how students may interpret their actions could help them both respond to and prevent a certain degree of uncertainty in student behavior. For instance,

a new teacher who can regulate his emotions is more likely to remain calm and be able to respond in high-pressure situations, such as a student abruptly challenging his authority (Parker, 2000). Or a new teacher who can assess beforehand that reprimanding a student in front of his peers may embarrass that student and provoke defiance as an attempt to "save face," is more likely to consider alternative disciplinary responses and thus avoid a sudden escalation of problem behavior.

Beyond relationships with students, SEL training has also shown promise in improving the relationships of administrators and teachers with colleagues (CASEL, 2003; Patti & Tobin, 2003; Elias, Bruene-Butler, Blum, & Schuyler, 2000; Goleman, 1998). For instance, many SEL programs bring administrators and teachers together to regularly learn and reflect, thus creating new opportunities for collegial exchange. Moreover, through review of strategies to promote social and emotional competencies in children, some SEL programs provide adults in schools with strategies for more effectively engaging with colleagues. For instance, an administrator's increased emotional self-awareness and use of active listening and problem-solving skills could increase her ability to communicate clearly with staff (Patti & Tobin, 2003; George, 2000).

The benefits of this type of adult-level training directly for new teachers could be considerable. Further, to the extent that SEL programs raise the skill level of administrators, mentors, and experienced teachers in areas such as emotional self-awareness, empathy / perspective taking, and problem-solving, these colleagues could directly enhance their ability to provide emotional support to new teachers. For instance, by applying perspective taking, mentors could anticipate and respond proactively to common emotional dilemmas faced by new teachers during their first year, such as feelings of incompetence, self-doubt, or disillusionment.

SECTION FOUR: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Review of the research strongly suggests that the social-emotional climate of schools significantly shapes new teachers' professional lives and weighs heavily in their decision of whether to stay in the classroom. More specifically, the ability of new teachers to foster positive relationships among students and the quality of new teachers' relationships with students and especially with other adults in school settings can "make or break" their teaching careers. For schools, teacher education programs, and other partners seeking to improve new teacher retention, the major implication of this review is clear: to improve retention schools must improve the quality of these relationships.

With that said, few teacher education programs and schools tend to these relationships in targeted, meaningful ways. Some of this lack of emphasis is likely due to the increased focus in recent years by both teacher education programs and schools on content knowledge and instructional skills, as mandated by tougher state licensure requirements and federal education funding mandates, such as the No Child Left Behind legislation. However, more concerning is that some schools may pay little attention to these relationships because of the pervasive "sink or swim" initiation process within the profession, in which new teachers are expected to make their own way with students—and adults, for that matter (Kardos et al., 2001; Darling-Hammond and Sclan, 1996; Little, 1990; Rosenholtz, 1989b; Lortie, 1975). In other words, new teachers who learn to cope with students and who blend in with the prevailing professional cultures of their schools are those that are considered "cut out" for this work. What is clear from this review is that this approach fails too many new teachers. In fact, it leads to the departure of a disproportionate number of the most talented and committed new teachers entering the field (Hare & Heap, 2001). Thus, this approach also fails students. New, targeted efforts to improve the quality of these relationships, then,

must become a significant component of teacher education and induction programs going forward.

Improving New Teachers' Relationships with Adults

While new teachers' relationships with both students and adults are important, priority should be given to strengthening new teachers' relationships with other adults in school settings. In terms of retention, nothing is more influential on new teachers' career decisions than the support they receive from colleagues, administrators, and mentors (Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1996; Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, & Liu, 2001; Brock & Grady, 2001; Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004). Collective support from administrators and colleagues creates school cultures that fuel new teachers' passion and commitment, nurture their intellectual growth, and positively shape their perceptions of both teaching as a profession and their role as individual teachers.

Moreover, administrators and colleagues help new teachers become more self-assured as teachers. They offer new teachers invaluable professional advice and reassurance (e.g., "that happens to me all the time....this is how I respond..."). They provide new teachers with sound instructional and management strategies. In turn, new teachers develop greater confidence that they are using effective strategies, and this confidence is perceived and responded to positively by students (Gratch, 1998b; Bullough, Knowles, & Crow, 1991; Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004). On a personal level, they serve as trusted friends and confidants, offering new teachers support in addressing acute emotional challenges common to new teachers in their first years, such as intense self-doubt, insecurity, and isolation. Taken together, these forms of support provide new teachers with a sense of connectedness to the adult community within schools—an overriding feeling that they are accepted and will be supported by their professional peers. This connectedness serves as a powerful protective factor against feelings of professional inadequacy or negative experiences

with students. For example, new teachers are less fazed by struggles with students if they know they can rely upon colleagues to “get them through tough times.”

In sum, the resounding message emerging from this review is that schools and their partners best ensure the success and retention of new teachers by fostering high quality, supportive relationships between new teachers and other adults in school settings. Thus, new teacher induction and mentoring should be considered the collective responsibility and undertaking of all staff members. Schools that fall short of this aim—that offer only traditional, one-to-one forms of mentoring or periodic supervision or check-ins by principals—do so at the risk of continued attrition among new teachers.

In the best circumstances, new teachers will join schools where high levels of collegiality are well-established norms and where structures that facilitate ongoing collaboration among new and veteran teachers are in place (e.g., study groups, team planning, co-teaching, etc.), such as the schools with “integrated professional cultures” described by researchers from the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers (Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004; Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, & Liu, 2001; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). In these cases, new teachers are often quickly brought into the fold and included in collaborative processes with their veteran coworkers. However, in many schools, collegiality and collaborative structures are often weak or nonexistent, and thus fostering forms of adult support for new teachers is especially challenging. If the culture and organizational practices that promote collaboration do not already exist it is unlikely that they will emerge without a substantial, lengthy reform process. With that said, there are some targeted, intermediate steps that teacher education programs and induction programs in all schools—regardless of their preexisting collaborative practices—can take to increase the level and quality of collegial support for new teachers. These steps include the following:

Teacher Education Programs

- **Develop awareness about the importance of collegiality.** Teacher education programs should review with prospective teachers the importance of collaboration with and support from colleagues to their professional growth, personal well-being, and retention. They can also encourage prospective teachers to proactively assess the level of collegial support in schools where they are considering accepting teaching positions. For instance, prospective teachers might be provided with indicators (e.g., the amount of common planning time) and questions for principals and teachers in hiring schools.
- **Instill collegial norms and practices.** By grouping prospective teachers into teams that complete coursework together, train in the same schools, and regularly meet to reflect on and share concerns, teacher education programs can both foster norms of collegiality and model collaborative practices that prospective teachers can then take with them into the schools in which they eventually teach.

Schools/Induction Programs

- **Develop school-wide awareness about importance of collegial support to new teachers.** Administrators could begin the process of creating collegial school cultures and practices by engaging all staff in discussions about the needs of new teachers. They could first review the research linking collegial support to new teacher efficacy and retention. They could then engage staff in self-assessment, exploring the capacity and willingness among staff to provide this type of support. Eventually, it may be possible for administrators and staff to consider in what ways increased collegiality could benefit all staff members.

- **Implement collaborative structures.** If not already in place, administrators could implement organizational practices to increase the level of collaboration among staff, such as scheduling regular common planning time and school-based professional development activities. Other, more ambitious steps administrators can take include creating cross-disciplinary teaching teams or restructuring schools into small learning communities, where smaller teams of administrators and teachers regularly collaborate to both plan curriculum and instruction and to tend to the social and emotional needs of a more manageable number of students.
- **Create “subcultures of collegiality” among new teachers.** If schools have limited capacity or willingness among staff to engage in collaborative work—as in the case of schools with veteran-oriented school cultures—administrators and teachers can establish smaller-scale collaborative norms and practices among new teachers, mentors, and willing veteran teachers. For instance, new teachers could meet regularly in support groups with other new teachers, administrators, mentors, and willing colleagues or as part of mentoring team arrangements, in which several new teachers are mentored by several mentor teachers, instead of the traditional one-to-one model. As new teachers “age up,” they and their mentors could maintain these practices, while expanding participation by including subsequent new teachers. In this way, the numbers of teachers within the school community who value and benefit from collegial support could grow over time.
- **Seek external help to foster collaboration.** Again, in schools where extensive staff collaboration is unlikely, administrators

and teachers could seek help from outside sources to promote collaborative work among teachers, minimally among new teachers. Professional development providers, such as the SEL programs discussed earlier, could offer schools well-developed structures for engaging teachers in collaborative learning and reflection. The best among these providers develop the self-capacity of schools to facilitate and maintain these structures independently. Teacher internet networks also may provide teachers with a valuable forum to connect with and problem solve with colleagues (Schuck, 2003; Merseth, 1990).

- **Train key support providers in social-emotional aspects that impact new teachers.** Administrators, mentors, and veteran teachers alike should become knowledgeable in the characteristic development stages of new teachers and in how to prepare new teachers to contend with the social and emotional aspects of teaching. They are in a position to provide ongoing support in how to create a positive classroom environment and foster the social and emotional growth of students. They can help new teachers interpret and respond to student behavior that is particularly challenging for novice teachers. They can model and support new teachers in developing competency in emotional management, communication, and interpersonal problem solving. In addition, they should be well-versed in the acute, underlying emotional issues that new teachers typically face during their first few years as well as trained in how to detect these issues and create support structures in which new teachers can safely share concerns, receive constructive feedback, and, if necessary, access additional services (e.g., mental health counseling).

Improving New Teachers' Relationships with Students

As important as adult relationships are to new teachers, their relationships with students are often the greatest source of both their satisfaction and their unhappiness at work. Almost all new teachers begin their careers with the hope that they will meaningfully impact the lives of their students and be appreciated in some way for their efforts (Johnson and Birkeland, 2003; Cattani, 2002). For many, such aspirations are the reason they became teachers in the first place. As a result, when things go wrong with students—as invariably they do—new teachers can become demoralized. Thus, new teachers need help managing their expectations and emotions regarding their relationships with students.

Moreover, new teachers need help managing and relating to students because it is often in these areas that they are the weakest and least prepared. As reviewed earlier, the combination of ineffective classroom management skills, poor interpersonal skills, and initial feelings of insecurity and inadequacy can produce a multitude of student behavioral troubles for new teachers. Without effective professional and emotional support for new teachers in these areas, these troubles can become chronic, causing both high levels of stress and turnover.

Finally, new teachers need support in managing and relating to students for the simple, essential reason that it will make them better teachers. Increasing their ability to create positive, safe learning environments, to respond to student misbehavior, and to develop strong bonds with students at the same time enhances their ability to deliver quality instruction and to foster a stronger attachment to school among students, thus promoting student academic success (Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1994, 1997; Zins, Weissberg, Wang, & Walberg, 2004). For these reasons, new teachers should receive targeted assistance starting in their pre-service training and continuing during their first few years in schools in the following areas:

- **Effective classroom management.** Both teacher education and school induction programs should provide high-quality, ongoing training in effective classroom management approaches. Specifically, this training should encompass research-based strategies for the following: (1) establishing positive classroom climates (e.g., rule setting, routines and time management, situational awareness, and forming relationships); (2) developing student capacity for self-management of their behavior; and (3) responding to student misbehavior (e.g., maintaining emotional objectivity, matching disciplinary responses to students and situations, and using conflict resolution strategies). While this training can begin during pre-service and over summer orientation sessions, the most substantial training component should take place in context—that is, when new teachers actually assume control of their classroom. Therefore, it is essential for schools—whether through induction and mentoring programs or on-site professional development efforts—to provide new teachers with early and ongoing in-class coaching, where effective classroom management strategies are modeled by experienced teachers or staff trainers and then applied by new teachers.
- **Dealing with uncertainty in student behavior.** Both teacher education and school induction programs should also better prepare new teachers to deal more effectively with the challenges that arise from the uncertainty of student behavior. While some uncertainty is inevitable, new teachers' ability to react in these circumstances can be improved (Floden & Clark, 1988). For instance, new teachers could benefit by reviewing real-life scenarios and responses to those scenarios with experienced teachers. Along these lines, there are several high-quality, case method

resources that provide authentic narratives of complex, behavioral scenarios and guiding questions to help teachers consider possible solutions (see Goor & Santos, 2002; Kaufman, Moster, Trent, & Halloran, 2002).

- **Cultural awareness.** Teacher education and induction programs should engage prospective and new teachers in intensive cultural awareness training. This training should include not only a review of the cultural experiences and perspectives of students but also well-facilitated self-exploration by teachers of their racial and cultural identity. Specifically, prospective and new teachers should reflect on ways that their cultural bias may shape both their instruction and perceptions of student behaviors and abilities. Moreover, this training should move beyond awareness to provide new teachers with explicit models of culturally sensitive curriculum, instruction, and classroom management methods (Weinstein, Tomilson-Clarke, & Curran, 2004). When possible, “culturally effective” teachers—teachers noted for both promoting academic success and developing strong connections with culturally diverse students—should be identified within schools and observed by prospective and new teachers.

New Approaches

In light of the importance of the ability of new teachers to foster positive relationships among students, with students, and with colleagues and the apparent shortcomings of current teacher education and induction programs in supporting new teachers in these areas, the need for new approaches is evident. As discussed, SEL programs stand out as a particularly well-suited resource for meeting this need. SEL programs would provide new teachers with a high-quality, proactive classroom management framework that offers research-based,

sequenced curriculum, and effective strategies for creating positive classroom climates, promoting student capacity to self-manage their own behavior, and responding to student misbehavior. They would bring school-wide behavior management approaches, in which all staff share a common understanding about behavioral expectations and a set of strategies for promoting expected behavior. Further, they would offer well-designed training models that could significantly augment school induction and mentoring efforts.

In addition, some SEL programs provide pathways for increasing collaboration and collegial support among adults in school settings. SEL training brings school administrators and staff together to learn and reflect on SEL concepts, student progress in this areas, and school-wide norms and practices concerning care and respect for others. Further, some SEL programs engage school staff in self-study and social-emotional skill development, increasing their capacity to model these skills to students but also to empathize, communicate, and problem solve with other adults. Targeted work with administrators and mentors—as well as other experienced teachers—in how to apply these skills in their work with new teachers may also be a highly effective way both to provide new teachers with emotional support and improve their overall working environment.

Implications for Future Research

While seeking to shed light on the importance of the social-emotional climate in classrooms and schools to new teachers and to suggest ways in which both teacher education programs and schools might improve these climates, this review also surfaces several areas in which more insight is needed. More specifically, a possible research agenda emerging from this review includes investigation of the following questions:

- **What is known about the direct impact of SEL programs on new teachers?** While there are studies that document the positive

effects of SEL training on teachers in general, less is known about the particular benefits of SEL training on new teachers. Future research might explore the effect of SEL on the following: (1) new teachers' ability to manage classrooms and relate to students; (2) new teachers' sense of efficacy; and (3) new teachers' retention.

- **What is known about the impact of SEL programs on overall collaboration and collegiality among school staff?** SEL programs often engage school staff in collaborative training structures and work with staff to develop their own social and emotional competencies, such as communication and problem-solving skills. Future research might explore whether these aspects of SEL programs have measurable, positive influences on collaborative and collegial norms and practices among school staff.
- **What are the most effective methods for fostering collaboration and collegial support in schools where these aspects are weak?** There has been extensive documentation of the characteristics of schools with strong collegial cultures and practices. However, less is known about how these schools develop and sustain these cultures and practices. Future research might identify ways in which schools with weak collegial cultures and practices have successfully transformed into schools with strong collegial cultures and practices.
- **What diagnostic methods exist for assessing a school's level of collaboration and collegial support?** Few schools would describe themselves as "non-collaborative" and "non-collegial." Other schools may recognize they need to improve in these

areas but are unsure about where they should focus their efforts. Future research might review and synthesize both current, relevant research (e.g., Harvard's Project on The Next Generation of Teachers research on school professional cultures) and existing instruments (e.g., the Center for Social and Emotional Education's Comprehensive School Climate Inventory) to develop quality assessment systems that would allow schools to self-evaluate their collaborative and collegial norms and practices. Information collected through such assessments could then inform school improvement efforts in these areas.

- **Are there effective methods for assessing the specific social-emotional skills and needs of teachers?** Both experienced and new teachers have particular strengths and weaknesses when it comes to their ability to establish positive classroom climates, promote social-emotional competencies in students, form relationships with and among students, and respond to student misbehavior. Teachers also differ in their willingness and ability to collaborate with other adults or to seek help from colleagues if and when they are struggling with certain aspects of their work. Further, teachers vary in their own level of social-emotional competency—for instance, in their level of emotional self-awareness, empathy and perspective-taking skill, and cultural awareness. Future research might both review existing methods and develop new methods for assessing a range of classroom management skills, collaborative practices, and social and emotional competencies among teachers. Information collected from such assessments could inform both mentoring and professional development efforts.

- **What is the most effective way to provide new teachers with intensive training and support in instruction and classroom management?** New teachers need high-quality training and support in both instruction and classroom management. Yet intensive support in these areas can be “too much, too fast,” creating steep learning curves that overwhelm and burn out new teachers. Future research might examine what the optimal balance and sequencing of training and support in classroom management, instruction, and other areas (e.g., cultural awareness and family engagement) are for new teachers.
- **How do relationships with families impact new teachers’ work climate and retention?** This review has focused on the impact of new teachers’ relationships with students and colleagues. Yet, clearly a key component of the social and emotional climate of schools is teachers’ relationships with families. The decision not to examine these relationships was based on the limited evidence pointing to these relationships as a key factor influencing new teacher retention. With that said, it is well-documented that strong connections with families can improve teachers’ abilities to relate to students as well as improve students’

attachment to and performance in school (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Deiro, 1997). Future research might explore what interventions have been successful in improving new teachers’ capacity to form relationships with families as well as the subsequent impact of these interventions on both students and new teachers, including their potential impact on teacher retention.

Closing Thoughts

Amid the heightened focus on student achievement and the demand for new teachers to possess strong content knowledge and instructional skill, teacher education programs and school leaders would do well to also consider in what ways new teachers must be supported to successfully work in the social-emotional climate of classrooms and schools. In this regard, teacher education programs and school leaders must explore ways in which they can improve new teachers’ relations with colleagues and students, as well as their ability to improve relations among students. A good place to start would be to consider the potential of SEL programs to improve these relationships. The integration of SEL components into both teacher education and induction programs could mark a significant, positive development in the ongoing struggle to retain new teachers.

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